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O 091800Z JUN 75

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2217

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 3181

FOR COUNSELOR SONNENFELDT AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJECT: MORE FREQUENT NATO SUMMITS

REF: (A) USNATO 3150 (B) SECTO 2081

1. SYG LUNS HAS CALLED FOR DISCUSSION OF FUTURE NATO SUMMITS AT JUNE 11 NAC (REF A). AS AID TO DEPARTMENT'S CONSIDERATION OF THIS ISSUE, THERE FOLLOW, WITH PROS AND CONS, MAIN OPTIONS AS WE SEE THEM ON QUESTIONS RELATED TO FUTURE SUMMITS. THE CHIEF ADVANTAGE OF SUMMIT GATHERINGS, IN ANY FORMAT OR AT WHATEVER FREQUENCY, IS OF COURSE THE OPPORTUNITY PROVIDED, AS AT THE RECENT SUMMIT FOR EXCHANGES OF VIEWS ON CENTRAL ISSUES. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME HERE BELIEVE THAT REGULAR SUMMITS WOULD DIMINISH WEIGHT OF SUMMITS HELD FROM TIME TO TIME AS REQUIRED TO UNDERSCORE ALLIANCE GOALS IN PERIODS OF STRESS.

2. FREQUENCY: THERE ARE ESSENTIALLY TWO OPTIONS: MEETING EVERY YEAR, OR LESS FREQUENTLY.

(A) ANNUAL MEETINGS:

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--PRO: NO ONE EXCEPT FRENCH FONMIN SAUVAGNARGUES RESERVED HIS POSITION ON PRESIDENT'S EXPRESSED PREFERENCE FOR YEARLY SUMMITS. MOREOVER, THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TOPICS WARRANTING ANNUAL DISCUSSIONS.

AS CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT AND THE PRESIDENT SAID, REGULAR ANNUAL SESSIONS ALSO WOULD REDUCE PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS THAT MAJOR RESULTS WOULD ENSUE FROM EACH SESSION.

--CON: ALREADY CROWDED PRESIDENTIAL AND OTHER HEADS OF GOVERNMENT'S CALENDARS WOULD BE FURTHER BURDENED AND MEETINGS IN SOME YEARS (I.E. DURING PRE-ELECTION PERIODS) COULD PROVE DIFFICULT FOR SOME TO ATTEND. THUS, LEVEL OF ATTENDANCE MIGHT DETERIORATE OVER TIME.

(B) LONGER INTERVAL (E.G. EVERY 18 MONTHS OR EVERY TWO YEARS):

--PRO: WOULD REDUCE DEMANDS ON HEADS OF GOVERNMENT AND FOREIGN MINISTERS SCHEDULING OF MEETINGS ALSO COULD BE MORE FLEXIBLE THAN FOR ANNUAL EVENTS.

--CON: COULD AFFECT CONTINUITY WHICH MIGHT BE EXPECTED FROM DISCUSSIONS AT ANNUAL GATHERINGS AND ROUNDS OF BILATERAL MEETINGS AND HENCE REDUCE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUMMITS.

3. VENUE: THE CHOICES ARE ESSENTIALLY LIMITED TO NATO HEADQUARTERS IN BRUSSELS, ALLIED CAPITALS OR OTHER CITIES.

(A) BRUSSELS:

--PRO: COULD DRAW ON EXISTING FACILITIES OF NATO HEADQUARTERS AND NATO INTERNATIONAL STAFF. BECAUSE BRUSSELS IS RECOGNIZED AS THE SITE OF NATO HEADQUARTERS, SUMMITS HELD THERE WOULD STRENGTHEN NATO'S PUBLIC IMAGE.

--CON: PLACES HEAVY BURDEN ON BELGIUM AS HOST.

(B) ROTATION AMONG OTHER CAPITALS:

--PRO: PUBLICITY SURROUNDING EVENTS WOULD PUBLICLY UNDERSCORE NATO'S IMPORTANCE TO POPULATION OF THE
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HOST COUNTRY WHICH WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE IF MEETINGS WERE LIMITED TO BRUSSELS. WOULD ALLOW OTHERS TO SHARE BURDEN OF AND DERIVE POLITICAL BENEFITS FROM HOSTING SUMMIT SESSIONS.

--CON: WOULD BE MORE EXPENSIVE, POSSIBLY MORE TIME-CONSUMING IN TERMS OF TRAVEL, AND COULD NOT DRAW FULLY ON STAFF AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE AT NATO HEADQUARTERS.

(C) OTHER LOCATIONS:

--PRO: IF HELD IN QUIET LOCALES WOULD BE

CONDUCTIVE TO LESS FORMAL AND MORE REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION.

--CON: COULD ADD TO FINANCIAL AND OTHER BURDENS
ON HOST NATIONS IF FACILITIES AND STAFF WERE NOT
READILY AVAILABLE.

4. FORMAT: THE CHOICE ESSENTIALLY IS BETWEEN THE NATO CONTEXT,
AND ANOTHER, LESS STRUCTURED FORMAT NOT IDENTIFIED WITH ANY
INSTITUTION. NEITHER FORMAT WOULD INHIBIT HOLDING BILATERAL
MEETINGS.

(A) NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETINGS AT SUMMIT LEVEL:

--PRO: IF MEETINGS WERE HELD IN BRUSSELS, ANY OTHER
FORMAT WOULD DENIGRATE THE ALLIANCE AND THE POSITION OF NATO'S
SYG. THE NAC ALSO PROVIDES A WELL-OILED MACHINE, WITH A
STRONG CHAIRMAN. MOREOVER, THE SYG AND PERMREPS WOULD PLAY
THEIR TRADITIONAL ROLE AND PROVIDE POST-SUMMIT CONTINUITY.

--CON: DISCUSSION WOULD TEND, IF PRECEDENT IS ANY
GUIDE, TO CONSIST MAINLY OF SET-PIECE INTERVENTIONS,
ALLOWING LIMITED GIVE-AND-TAKE (THOUGH THIS APPROACH COULD
BE MODIFIED IN FAVOR OF MORE INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS AS HAS
BEEN THE CASE IN RECENT MINISTERIAL MEETINGS).

(B) INFORMAL MEETINGS ON THE PATTERN OF THE EC MINISTERS'
GYMICH GATHERING WHICH SET A STYLE OF VERY INFORMAL
SUMMITRY:

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--PRO: WOULD ENCOURAGE MAXIMUM FREEDOM OF EXCHANGE
OF VIEWS IN A VERY PRIVATE SETTING, AND THUS WOULD
PERMIT ALLIED LEADERS TO BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED. WOULD
ALSO AVOID ISSUE WHICH ARISES IN NAC OF COMPETENCE
OF THE COUNCIL TO ADDRESS MATTERS NOT RELATED TO
POLITICAL AND SECURITY ISSUES.

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--CON: WOULD TEND TO PLAY DOWN NATO'S IMPORTANCE AS THE CORNERSTONE OF WESTERN SECURITY. LACK OF STRUCTURE COULD BE TROUBLESOME FOR SOME HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WHOSE LANGUAGE CAPABILITIES MAY BE LIMITED OR WHO WOULD BE UNCOMFORTABLE FOR POLITICAL OR OTHER REASONS IN AN INFORMAL GATHERING. WOULD NOT HAVE THE SAME PUBLIC IMPACT AS A STRUCTURED SUMMIT WITH ITS SURROUNDING FORMALITY AND POMP.

5. PARTICIPATION: IF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL IS THE SUMMIT VEHICLE, THE ISSUE OF PARTICIPATION ARISES ONLY AS A FUNCTION OF THE USUAL US DESIRE TO LIMIT ATTENDANCE. HOWEVER, IN AN INFORMAL SUMMIT, THE QUESTION OF ATTENDANCE ASSUMES GREATER IMPORTANCE, AND OPTIONS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) PRINCIPALS ONLY:

--PRO: WOULD PERMIT HIGHLY INFORMAL EXCHANGES OF VIEWS.

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--CON: COULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT SPEAK FRENCH OR ENGLISH. WOULD ALSO STIMULATE CONCERNS ABOUT INFORMING SUB-SUMMIT OFFICIALS OF THE PRINCIPALS' DEBATE AND DECISIONS.

(B) PRINCIPALS PLUS ONE (PRESUMABLY FOREIGN MINISTERS):

PRO: WOULD HELP MEET THE PROBLEM OF RECORDING RESULTS FOR LATER ACTION BY GOVERNMENTS. WHERE, AS IN GERMANY, FOREIGN MINISTER IS MEMBER OF A COALITION PARTY OTHER THAN PRIME MINISTER'S WOULD ALSO HELP GOVERNMENT COHESION. THE LARGER GROUP COULD ALSO HELP STIMULATE DISCUSSION.

--CON: WOULD DETRACT FROM THE INFORMALITY AND INTIMATE CHARACTER OF THE GATHERING.

(C) TWO PLUS SOME OTHERS:

--PRO: IF KEPT WITHIN FAIRLY NARROW LIMITS, WOULD PERMIT BOTH A DEGREE OF INFORMALITY AND USEFUL STAFF SUPPORT. COULD ALLOW NATO PERMREPS TO BE INVOLVED.

--CONC: WOULD DETRACT FROM INFORMALITY AND POSSIBLY
FROM FREE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS.

6. AGENDA: WE BELIEVE THAT CONFINEMENT OF DISCUSSION
TO TRADITIONAL NATO CONCERNS IN THE POLITICAL/SECURITY SPHERE
MIGHT MAKE FRANCE'S PARTICIPATION EASIER. AS THE RECENT SUMMIT
PROVED, HOWEVER, DISCUSSION, TO BE REALISTIC AND PRODUCTIVE,
MUST TOUCH UPON INEXTRICABLY INTERWINED POLITICAL, SECURITY
AND ECONOMIC ISSUES.

7. AS REQUESTED IN REF A, WE WOULD WELCOME DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS
ON THESE POSSIBILITIES.
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